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PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

MR. RICH FROM RICHMOND

A FARCE COMEDY

BY

JOSEPH H. SLATER

DICK & FITZGERALD
PUBLISHERS
18 Ann Street, New York

PLAYS FOR FEMALE CHARACTERS ONLY

15 CENTS EACH

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CRANFORD DAMES. 2 Scenes; 1½ hours	8
GERTRUDE MASON, M.D. 1 Act; 30 minutes	7
CHEERFUL COMPANION. 1 Act; 25 minutes	2
LESSON IN ELEGANCE. 1 Act; 30 minutes	4
MAIDENS ALL FORLORN. 3 Acts; 1¼ hours	6
MURDER WILL OUT. 1 Act; 30 minutes	6
ROMANCE OF PHYLLIS. 3 Acts; 1¼ hours	4
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WHITE DOVE OF ONEIDA. 2 Acts; 45 minutes	4
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PRINCESS KIKU. (25 cents)	13
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MERRY OLD MAIDS. (25 cents.) Motion Song	11

PLAYS FOR MALE CHARACTERS ONLY

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	M
APRIL FOOLS. 1 Act; 30 minutes	3
BYRD AND HURD. 1 Act; 40 minutes	6
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WANTED, A MAHATMA. 1 Act; 30 minutes	4
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MEDICA. 1 Act; 35 minutes	7
NIGGER NIGHT SCHOOL. 1 Act; 30 minutes	6
SLIM JIM AND THE HOODOO. 1 Act; 30 minutes	5
WANTED. A CONFIDENTIAL CLERK. 1 Act; 30 minutes	6
SNOBSON'S STAG PARTY. 1 Act; 1 hour	12
PICKLES AND TICKLES. 1 Act; 20 minutes	6
HARVEST STORM. 1 Act; 40 minutes	10
CASE OF HERR BAR ROOMSKI. Mock Trial; 2 hours	28
DARKEY BREACH OF PROMISE CASE. Mock Trial.	22
GREAT LIBEL CASE. Mock Trial; 1 Scene; 2 hours	21
RIDING THE GOAT. Burlesque Initiation; 1 Scene; 1½ hours	24

DICK & FITZGERALD, Publishers, 18 Ann Street, N. Y.

MR. RICH FROM RICHMOND

A Farce Comedy in Three Acts

IN WHICH SPECIALTIES AND MUSICAL NUMBERS MAY BE INTRODUCED

By JOSEPH H. SLATER

AUTHOR OF PETER PIPER'S TROUBLES, THE COON REHEARSAL, ETC.

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NEW YORK

DICK & FITZGERALD

18 ANN STREET

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Mr. Rich From Richmond.

CHARACTERS.

LOUIS SCHWOPPENHOPPENHEIMER..*Proprietor of "The Busy Bee"*
PETER PIKER.....*An up-to-date cash boy*
PHINEAS SKIPPINGO.....*A floor-walker in "The Busy Bee"*
MR. RICH, *from Richmond*.....*With a tender heart*
MR. BROWN, *from Brownville*.....*An unwelcome visitor*
CARAWAY SLICK.....*A cash register inspector*
TONY FLIM-FLAM.....*A collector of pictures*
MR. A. CHEATHIM.....*A trader in stamps*
MR. SMOOTHTOUCH .....*A trader in money*
LENA SCHWOPPENHOPPENHEIMER.....*Louis' daughter*
BERTHA CLAY MONEYPENNY..*A romantic saleslady and cashier*
SUSIE SWEENEY.....*A smart saleslady*
CUSTOMERS *and* SALESGIRLS.

NOTE. The minor parts may be doubled as follows, according to the manager's discretion: MR. BROWNE CARAWAY SLICK, TONY FLIM-FLAM, MR. CHEATHIM and MR. SMOOTHTOUCH. Also as many girls as desired may be used as salesladies.

TIME.—*To-day.* LOCALITY.—*Any country town.*

TIME OF PLAYING.—*A full evening.*

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AUG 3 1915

No 1

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. Interior of "The Busy Bee." Pay day. Twenty-five dollars, total contents of cash register. How to make business active, a fire, a picnic, a dance or rummage sale. "Oh no, it was not me." The floor-walker arrives. The advertisement for 1000 cash boys. What one honest cash boy can do. "Laying" for the next customer and her frantic escape. SKIPPINGO busy at telephone. Giving the fish a drink. CARAWAY SLICK inspects the cash register. Cupid's Serenade.

ACT II. Scene, same as Act I. Same day. PETER PIKER, the cash boy, explains to SKIPPINGO how his father was also a floor-walker. PETER'S duties in his previous places and experiences as a salesman. His references. LOUIS requires security. PETER'S grandmothers. LOUIS makes a generous proposition to PETER and outlines his course of work, also his schedule of meals. Additional work for PETER. CHEATHIM pays for his tobacco with stamps. The strike.

ACT III. Scene same as Acts I and II. Two days later. The salesgirls want to call off the strike. The request granted. Letter from MR. RICH. LOUIS' generosity. Arrival of MR. RICH. The mistake discovered. The dog biscuit. Correct this time. MR. RICH refreshes himself. His buttermilk ablution. FLIM-FIAM executes his scheme and disappears with the dollar bill. LOUIS anxious about MR. RICH and the money. SMOOOTHTOUCH changes a fifty dollar bill. MR. RICH receives a telegram. LOUIS' plans totally upset, but his wishes fulfilled in another manner.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

LOUIS. About 45 years of age. Wears half-bald wig, hair rather long; a tight fitting cut-away coat, with plaid trousers, both seemingly a size too small. Also spats.

PETER. About 20 years of age. Wears a loud checked suit. Is very "Breezy" in talk and manner.

PHINEAS. About 30 years of age. Should have a rather dark complexion, black hair and moustache. Wears sack coat and plaid trousers.

MR. RICH. About 25 years of age. Blonde hair; over dressed in the latest style; decidedly effeminate in manner.

LENA. About 24 years of age. She is very loudly dressed in the latest style.

SALESGIRLS. All dressed nearly alike, white shirt waists, etc., but rather stylish.

Other costumes as may be available, appropriate to characters portrayed.

The costumes noted are suggestions only and may be altered to suit circumstances, but the more exaggerated, the greater the effect.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES.

Money in drawer of cash register. Novel for BERTHA. Kodak for FLIM-FLAM. Sheet of music, watch and special delivery letter for SKIPPINGO. Three letters (one to resemble a laundry ticket) door mat, axe, and two suit cases for PETER PIKER. Bills for LOUIS. Small satchel containing bills, smelling salts, powder puff, etc. with strap attached to hang around neck for MR. RICH. Book and old suit case for MR. BROWNE. Several bills for MR. SMOOTHTOUCH.

NOTE. The above is only a necessary list, the store should be filled with all the accessories that go to make up the interior of a dry-goods store, but should not be too crowded.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R. means right hand; L., left hand; C., center of stage; L. C., left of center; R. C., right of center; C. D., door in center of rear flat; D. L., door at left; D. R., door at right. UP means toward back of stage; DOWN, towards footlights.

Mr. Rich From Richmond.

ACT I.

SCENE:—*The interior of a department store. The following signs should be placed in various parts of the store—"Bargain Day" "No Trust" "Big Bargains" "Save Money and Buy Here" "Busy Bee is the Place to Deal" "Call Again" etc., also prices on goods.* C. D. *in rear flat. Interior backing. Doors* DOWN R. *and* L. *Counters running from* C. D. *to* D. R. *and* D. L. *Telephone on wall near* C. D. *Cash register on counter near* D. L. *Stool for cashier behind register. Genuine dollar bill in frame* L. *of* C. D. *so that it can be easily reached. Boxes, etc. on shelves. Parasol on counter. Cigar boxes on counter* L., *tobacco, etc. Chair near* D. L. *Chairs or high stools in front of counters for customers. At rise* DISCOVERED BERTHA CLAY MONEYPENNY *seated near cash register* L. SUSIE SWEENEY *behind counter* R. *and other salesgirls standing behind counters* R. *and* L. *All sing* "The Girl Behind the Counter" *or any popular song.*

After song, ENTER LOUIS C. D.

ALL GIRLS. Good morning, Mr. Schwoppenhoppenheimer.

LOUIS. What for dis good morning all so sudden? Why so friendly all at once dis morning?

GIRLS. Why, this is pay day.

LOUIS. Oh, dis is pay day. Dot is why you all feel so good yet already.

GIRLS. Why of course, we are going to be paid in full.

LOUIS. Paid when full, eh? You're not going to be paid when full or sober. Where is your salary coming from, can you tolt me, and a bankrupt sale on now already? (*To* CASHIER) Miss Cashier, how much money in de treasury dis morning?

BERTHA. About twenty-five dollars, all you left there last night.

LOUIS. We must do somdings to make some business, but what shall we do?

FIRST GIRL. I would say start a fire.

SECOND GIRL. Get up a picnic.

THIRD GIRL. Give a free dance.

FOURTH GIRL. Get up a rummage sale.

LOUIS (*disgusted*). A dance, a picnic, a rummage sale. Fun, fun, dot's all wot you girls think about. Ice-cream socials and picnics. I've got a better idea. I'll raffle off all of you at ten cents a chance, and you all get husbands for ten cents each.

BERTHA. Oh, you ten cent husband. (GIRLS *laugh*)

LOUIS. Dot's right, laugh and show your ignorance, but it don't bring no business. De wise old hen never cackles about what she's going to do, but what she has done. Now we must do something to boost business. Girls, I've got good news for you.

GIRLS. Oh, what is it? Are you going to give us a holiday?

LOUIS. Better dan dat, I'm going to give most of you de bounce. I must cut down expenses, and so I'm going to cut your salaries in half.

BERTHA. Oh pshaw! You cut our salaries in half only last week.

LOUIS. Well, I'll cut them some more this week till there is nodings left of them. It's too much worry trying to keep track of wot you owe me now.

BERTHA. Oh, rats!

LOUIS. Who was dat who said rats?

GIRLS (*except* SUSIE SWEENEY, *in a sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS. Susie Sweeney, dot rat will cost you ten dollars.

SUSIE. Rats come high, how much for mice?

LOUIS. Who said mice?

GIRLS (*as before, in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS. Dis store is rapidly turning into a moving picture show. I can see your finish. Susie Sweeney how much salary a week are you getting now?

SUSIE. One dollar and fifty cents a week, some weeks.

LOUIS. All right, dis being de first of April called "All Fool's Day" I'll fine you one dollar and seventy-five cents,

den you'll owe me a quarter at the end of the week. Where is de walk-floorer?

BERTHA. I think he is down in the basement playing marbles or opening up a bale of goods.

LOUIS. Opening up a bale of hay?

ENTER PHINEAS SKIPPINGO, D. R.

SKIPPINGO. Good morning, Mr. Schwoppenhoppenheimer.

LOUIS. How often have I tolt you not to try and pronunciate my name? The last walk-floorer came near losing his life by swallowing his false teeth, so don't do it no more; besides it wastes valuable time. Wot was you doing? I was looking for you everywheres but couldn't find you somewheres.

SKIPPINGO. I was down stairs decorating the window.

LOUIS. Decorating the window! What for?

SKIPPINGO. Why, to attract customers, of course.

LOUIS. Do you expect customers to come in through de window?

SKIPPINGO. No, sir, but through the door after they have seen the goods in the window.

LOUIS. Dot's no business, Mr. Walk-floorer. We ain't done enough business in dis store to support a sick canary. And dese salesladies as dey call themselves are a pack of good-for-nothing idlers. (*Indicates* BERTHA, *who is reading a novel*) Look at dot young chicken over dere mit der red-rosette cast of countenance. She is now reading one of Laura Jean Slobby's novels entitled "Her Golden Hair was Hanging Down de Bed Post." (ALL GIRLS *laugh*) Do you hear dem laughing now instead of boosting business and dusting the cob-webs off last year's stock?

SKIPPINGO. Well, sir, what can I do about it?

LOUIS. What can you do about it? Don't I pay you to boost business? Dot's what I pay you four and a half dollars a week for.

SKIPPINGO. Well, Mr. Schwoppen——

LOUIS. Don't say it. Didn't I tolt you already yet more than once time?

SKIPPINGO. Then I would suggest that we advertise.

LOUIS. Advertise, what for?

SKIPPINGO. For one thousand cash boys.

LOUIS. A thousand cash boys! Oh, Gott im Himmel! Do you think I'm going to start a kindergarten school? What do we want mit a thousand cash boys?

SKIPPINGO. Why, it would be a capital way to attract a

crowd and besides, it would give the public the impression that we were doing a rushing business.

LOUIS. A rushing business in cash boys, eh?

SKIPPINGO. No, we could then select one good boy from among the thousand.

LOUIS. Oh, I see, a good cash boy is one in a thousand, eh? But what do we want mit a cash boy when we've got a cash register already yet?

SKIPPINGO. To carry the cash from the customers to the cashier and bring back the change.

LOUIS. And by the time it reaches me there'll be no change left. No, sir, I want no thousand cash boys in my store. One honest cash boy can steal all de cash I can afford to lose at present.

SKIPPINGO. Very well, sir, then I shall put a sign in the window "Cash Boy Wanted."

LOUIS. Say, couldn't you leave out the word "Boy" and put "Cash Wanted?"

SKIPPINGO. But that would reveal your financial embarrassment to the general public.

LOUIS. Don't they know it already when we have a bankrupt sale going on?

SKIPPINGO. Very well, sir, I'll go right away and put the sign in the window "Cash Boy Wanted."

LOUIS. No thousand, remember.

SKIPPINGO. All right, sir. [EXIT D. R.

BERTHA (*reading from novel*). "And the villain still pursued her."

LOUIS. See here, Bertha Clay, if you have another hemorrhage like that I'll fire the cash register at your head. And you attend to business and stop reading "The Life of Jesse James" and "Lydia Pinkham" or I'll send you to the foolish factory.

GIRLS (*sing*). "Oh, You Beautiful Doll."

LOUIS. Stop dot beautiful doll business. What foolishness during business hours. Dis is no open air free-for-all concert hall. I want you all to get busy and de next customer dot comes in, lay for him.

BERTHA. What do you take us for, a bunch of Plymouth Rock hens?

LOUIS. Well, you ain't no spring chickens, you beautiful dolls. (*To* BERTHA) What I meant to say when you didn't let me say it was dot you mustn't let any cash customers get away. We need the money.

GIRLS. Yes, and so do we.

LOUIS. Who said "So do we?"

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS (*crosses to* R.) Susie Sweeney, I discharge you.

SUSIE. If you do, I'll quit.

ENTER *a woman customer*, C. D.

CUSTOMER. Do you keep any fly paper here?

GIRLS (*all make a rush at her, exclaiming*). What can I do for you? (WOMAN, *frightened, screams and* EXITS C. D. *hastily*) Oh, pshaw! (GIRLS *cross back to positions behind counters*)

BERTHA. Foiled again, and the villain still pursued her.

LOUIS. Dot's how you scare de customers away. What did she want?

SUSIE. Some fly paper, and we haven't any.

LOUIS. Well, what of dat? You might have sold her some wall paper, or a porous plaster. (GIRLS *all laugh*) Who was dot, who gave me de merry ha-ha?

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS. Susie Sweeney, dot merry ha-ha will cost you just five dollars.

SUSIE. I didn't laugh, sir, that is not with my mouth, so to speak. I'll tell you how it was. I've the St. Vitus dance and can't help it.

LOUIS. I don't care if you have the grizzley bear waltz, dot only makes the offense all de greater. (*Crosses to* D. L.) I'm going inside now to take an inventory of de baby carriages. When I come back I will be here. [EXIT D. L.

NOTE. Specialties may be introduced here by Susie and Bertha, assisted by the girls in the chorus.

After specialty ENTER LOUIS D. L.

LOUIS. Any one here since I've been gone?

SUSIE. Only one man and he was a human being.

LOUIS. What did the human being want?

SUSIE. He wanted to know if you'd let him take a moving picture of a piece of cheese? (GIRLS *laugh*)

LOUIS. Dot merry ha-ha will cost you all five dollars and you'll owe yourself money at de end of de week for making fun of my cheese.

ENTER SKIPPINGO D. R., *with sheet of music.*

SKIPPINGO. It's all right, sir.

LOUIS. What's all right, sir?

SKIPPINGO. It's in the window.

LOUIS. What's in de window, de plate glass?

SKIPPINGO. No, sir, the sign you told me to put up "Cash Boy Wanted."

LOUIS. Any results?

SKIPPINGO. Not yet, sir, we must wait and hope.

LOUIS. Yah, dat's what I've been doing the past two years.

SKIPPINGO. We must adopt the policy of watchful waiting and remember that "Hope springs eternal in the human breast" as the poet says. (*Telephone bell rings*)

LOUIS. Never mind what de poet says, see what de telephone says, it may be a customer. (SKIPPINGO *crosses to telephone*)

SKIPPINGO (*business at telephone*). Yes, yes, this is The Busy Bee." (*To* LOUIS) It's a customer, sir, he wants to know if we have any dried cod fish.

LOUIS. Yah, dell him we have plenty of dried cod fish, dot is our long suit.

SKIPPINGO (*talking through 'phone*). Yes, we have plenty of dried cod fish. (*To* LOUIS) He wants to know if they are very dry.

LOUIS. Yah, tell him they are, and ask him how much he wants to buy.

SKIPPINGO. He says he doesn't want to buy any, but if they are very dry isn't it about time to give them a drink. (ALL *laugh*)

LOUIS. Oh, Gott im Himmel, such foolishness. I'll have dot 'phone taken out right quick so soon. (LOUIS *is in corner* L.)

ENTER CARAWAY SLICK, C. D.

CARAWAY. I beg pardon, gentlemen, where is the cash register?

SKIPPINGO (*indicates* L.) Over there, sir. (*Crosses* DOWN R. *corner*)

CARAWAY (*crosses to register, plays upon the keys as if it were a piano*). Do—Re—Mi—Fa—So—La—Si—Do—Dough—dough—that's the note I want. (*Opens register and takes bills out. Goes* C., *counting money*) Gentleman, your register is O. K. and in excellent working order. (*Starts towards* C. D.)

SKIPPINGO. One moment before you go, sir. Might I inquire

who you are and by what right you open the cash register?

CARAWAY (*feeling in pocket for card*). Oh, yes, of course I forgot my card; quite an oversight on my part. I must have left it at my hotel, The Walled-Off Castoria. I am a cash register inspector and my name is Caraway Slick. Good day, gentlemen. (*Sings*) "We shall meet on that Beautiful Shore" "In the Sweet Bye and Bye."

[EXIT C. D., *singing.*

BERTHA (*looking in cash register*). Boss, he nearly emptied the cash register.

SKIPPINGO. I wonder if he wasn't a swindler.

LOUIS. Of course he was, and you stood there and let him rob me before your very eyes.

SKIPPINGO. I couldn't help him.

LOUIS. Couldn't help him? He didn't want you to help him, he helped himself. Oh, Gott im Himmel, I must sell out before I'm robbed. What did he say his name was?

SKIPPINGO. Caraway Slick.

LOUIS. Caraway Slick, dot was a good name for him; he carried away de cash slick enough. I wouldn't be surprised to see de next fellow drive a moving van up to de front door and carry away de whole store. I'll stop ten dollars out of de wages I owe you. (*Points to music sheet in* SKIPPINGO'S *hand*) What have you there?

SKIPPINGO. This is a sheet of new music.

LOUIS. I thought it was a map of (*Some town nearby*) before the war.

SKIPPINGO. I am going to have your daughter, Lena, who is our musical demonstrator sing this.

LOUIS. "De Busy Bee" is going to be turned into a Singing Bee. Oh, well, go ahead and enjoy yourselves. This is All Fool's Day. I don't care whether school keeps or not. (*Crosses to* D. L.)

BERTHA. So say we all of us. Isch-ka-bibble.

LOUIS (*turns at* D. L.). Who said dot "Ish-ka-bibble?"

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS. Susie Sweeney, dot "Ish-ka-bibble" will cost you five dollars. You are the chief exalted ruler of all de anarchists in de Busy Bee. [EXIT D. L.

ENTER LENA C. D.

LENA. Howdy, girls.

GIRLS (*sing*). "What's the matter with Lena? She's all right."

SKIPPINGO. Lena, you are just in time. I would like you to sing this new song; we want to have a run on it, as it is very popular in the large cities. It is called——

BERTHA. "For the Love of Mike."

SKIPPINGO. Who said "For the Love of Mike?"

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

SKIPPINGO. Susie Sweeney, you are incorrigible. I'll have to report you to the boss and let him deal with you.

SUSIE. I'll be glad to see anybody that will deal in "The Busy Bee." (GIRLS *laugh*)

SKIPPINGO. Silence, girls, and behave yourselves if you can. I was about to say that the name of the song is——

BERTHA (*spouting*). Bah, what's in a name? A song by any other name will sound as sweet.

SKIPPINGO. Bertha Clay, I caught you that time. You can't blame it on Susie Sweeney. The name is——

LENA (*snatches music from* SKIPPINGO, *who* EXITS D. R.). Oh, never mind the name. I'll sing it. (GIRLS *go* C. *and form a circle around* LENA *who sings* "Cupid's Serenade." *During the eight lines commencing "Pretty Girl" she holds parasol which she has taken from the counter and thrums upon it, keeping time to music. During singing of the eight lines "Oh, Gretchen" she imitates the steps of a clog dance*)

Words and music of "Cupid's Serenade" supplied by the publishers, price 30 cents.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE:—*Same as* ACT I. *Same day.*

ENTER PETER PIKER, C. D.

PETER (*looking around*). Well, this must be the place all right. And they call this "The Busy Bee." But the bee doesn't seem to be very busy now. I wonder if the king bee is at home? I'll bet there are plenty of drones in the hive. I saw a sign in the window "Cash Boy Wanted." From the appearance of things here I should say they ought to put up another sign, "Customers Wanted."

ENTER SKIPPINGO, D. R.

SKIPPINGO (*to* PETER). Well, young man, what can I do for you?

PETER. You can give me two dollars and sixty cents out of the cash register.

SKIPPINGO. No, sir, we are not doing that kind of business.

PETER. From the looks of things, I don't think you are doing any kind of business just now.

SKIPPINGO. Well, business is rather dead.

PETER. Well, it ain't any of my funeral.

SKIPPINGO. No, of course not, you are not to blame. But what brought you here?

PETER. I saw a sign in the window "Cash Boy Wanted." I want cash so I came in after the job.

SKIPPINGO. Oh, I understand. You have applied for the position?

PETER. Yes, I want to engage you.

SKIPPINGO. You wish to engage me?

PETER. Yes, I wish to engage you as my boss.

SKIPPINGO (*laughing*). You are quite a genius. However, I may inform you that I am not the boss.

PETER. No? Then I have been wasting my valuable time on you? Who are you, the ice-man?

SKIPPINGO. No, young man, I'm the floor-walker.

PETER. My father was a floor-walker.

SKIPPINGO. Indeed, where was he employed?

PETER. He wasn't employed anywhere. Everybody worked but father.

SKIPPINGO. Then how could he be a floor-walker?

PETER. Mother made him walk the floor with me every night when I was cutting my teeth.

SKIPPINGO. Oh, I see, your father belonged to "Walker's Brigade.

PETER. No, sir, to the "Light Infantry."

SKIPPINGO. Where did you work last?

PETER. I didn't work anywhere. I'm a son of rest. I was in the clothing department of Ketchim & Fleecehim, but they hired me as an ornament to the store. My business was to dress the dummies and see that they didn't walk away or take to drink, and also watch the moths to see that none of them died of indigestion from overeating the woolen clothing.

SKIPPINGO. That certainly was an easy job.

PETER. But they wanted me to go on the road.

SKIPPINGO. As a traveling salesman for the house?

PETER. Nothing of the sort. They wanted me to go out on the road, to sweep the snow off, to make a path for the customers, and right there I balked.

SKIPPINGO. And of course they fired you.

PETER. No, sir, I refused to quit. We had four sales in four weeks and they retired with all kinds of money.

SKIPPINGO. What kind of sales were they?

PETER. First we had a bankrupt sale; the second week Ikey Einstein sprinkled a gallon of gasolene over the men's clothing to kill the moths. I guess one of the moths set fire to the clothes. Then we organized a fire sale, but the fire department in putting out the fire flooded the store with water, so they watered the stock. Then we advertised a water sale. The fourth week one of the managers cleared out with the cash register, then we started a clearance sale. I didn't wait for the finish. When I heard that the cash register had gone I lost my appetite and my job at the same time. And now I am a public inspector of side walks, a gentleman of leisure waiting for something to turn up.

SKIPPINGO. I suppose you have a good reference from your last place?

PETER. Yes, I have a good recommend. (*Aside*) I wrote it myself.

SKIPPINGO. You remain here and I'll send the boss to you. (*Crosses to* D. L.)

PETER. Then run right along. I always like to do business with the boss. I have no time to waste on common people. By the way, what name does he call himself?

SKIPPINGO. Louis Schwoppenhoppenheimer.

PETER (*falls on floor, has fit*). Oh, Lord, I didn't think I was going to work for a Russian. Would you just as soon break that name up into small chunks?

SKIPPINGO. You may call him "Schwapp for Short." He likes to be called boss. I'll go and send him to you.

[EXIT D. L.

PETER. Yes, trot him out and tell him he needn't bring his name along. If I get this job I'll have to ask Schwoppenhoppenheimer to rechristen himself or prune his name down or I can't hold the job. That name would cause a man to drop dead of apoplexity. Oh, I'll like this place. I feel it in my bones. (PETER *may introduce a specialty here*)

After specialty ENTER LOUIS, D. L.

LOUIS. Well, young man, what can I do you for?

PETER. You can't do me for a cent. I want to see the boss.

LOUIS. I am the boss. I am it.

PETER. I want no kidding from the janitor. I came here for the job of cash boy.

LOUIS. Well, you'll do. Have you ten dollars in cash about you?

PETER. Ten dollars in cash, what for?

LOUIS. To put up bonds as security, before you get der position as cash boy. You see you will be entrusted with large sums of money, sometimes as high as fifty cents. Your duties will be to take der cash to der cashier's desk and bring back the correct change, without short-changing der customer. Der last cash boy we had here was a graduate from the Elmira Reformatory and during an attack of brain storm he walked off mit der change, he was so absent-minded. How many grandmothers have you?

PETER. One, but she is dead and buried—that is, she was buried after she died, not before.

LOUIS. Well, that's in your favor. Der last boy we had buried eight grandmothers during one base-ball season. We had to let him off to attend der funerals; so don't get der habit. Have you any reference?

PETER. Yes. Have you? Say, what is a reference?

LOUIS. Something like a statement in writing, to show dat you have never served a third term in penitentiary for shop-lifting or sheep stealing—something to prove dat you are not an habitual criminal and will steal nothing dat's nailed to de floor.

PETER. You bet your boots, I've got one right here. (*Hands paper to* LOUIS)

LOUIS. Dis is a Chinese laundry ticket.

PETER (*takes back ticket*). Oh, so it is my mistake and your treat. I gave you the wrong one. (*Gives* LOUIS *another piece of paper*) Here it is.

LOUIS. Dis is a policy slip. Young man, do you play policy?

PETER. Yes, sir, I'm happy to say I do. Ain't "Honesty the best policy?" (*Takes back policy slip. Hands* LOUIS *a large sheet of paper*) Here you are.

LOUIS (*reads paper*). "Dis is to certify that de beärer, Peter Piker, as a cash boy has few equals and no superiors. He is in a class all by himself and will bear watching." Dis don't say anything about your honesty.

PETER. No, sir, the less said about that, the better.

LOUIS. Young man, are you given to drink?

PETER. Not unless drink is given to me.

LOUIS. Answer me truthfully, as you hope to hold down dis job, do you smoke cigarettes?

PETER. Like little George Washington of old, I cannot tell a lie. Yes, boss, I do.

LOUIS. Then give me de makings. (PETER *gives tobacco*) Have you ever had de measles?

PETER. No, but I had a mouse run up the leg of my pantaloons.

LOUIS. De job is yours when you hand me over ten dollars as security. I need de money.

PETER. But say, boss, I'd like to see your references. What security do I get that I'll ever get my salary?

LOUIS. I'll give you an interest in der business after fifteen years. Now your work here will be light and pleasant. First, you'll have to come to de store at five o'clock in de morning and wash all der windows and by dat time breakfast will be ready.

PETER. And by that time I'll be ready for breakfast.

LOUIS. For breakfast we'll have mutton chops, bacon and eggs, buttered toast, omelette, Saratoga chips, strawberries and cream——

PETER. Yum! yum! my sugar plum, that's good enough for me.

LOUIS. Yes, but that is not for you. For you we have prepared a special dish—mush.

PETER. Mush!

LOUIS. And after breakfast you come back to de store, run errands, dust de counters, sweep de floors and side-walk, run de elevator and by that time dinner will be ready.

PETER. Yes and by that time I'll have an appetite for my dinner.

LOUIS. For dinner we have fricasseed chicken, pâté de fois gras; wild turkey stuffed with prunes, ice-cream and angel cake.

PETER. Me for the angel cake.

LOUIS. But the angel cake is not for you.

PETER. Just my luck.

LOUIS. For you we have a special dish, fried mush.

PETER. It's pretty much mush all the time.

LOUIS. Oh, you'll like the place.

PETER. Oh, I know I will, but I'd like a change of diet once in a life-time. It's a nice lazy job, nothing to do but work, and

nothing to eat but mush. Say, what time does the store close?

LOUIS. At seven o'clock; but you don't quit work when the store closes.

PETER. No, this must be a continuous performance job.

LOUIS. You see, you'll have to act as night watchman. You will be on duty from seven P. M. till four A. M. and that ends your night's work.

PETER. Won't that be nice. Let me understand you. First I work all day, when I change off to a night watchman till four in the morning. That gives me a whole hour to sleep.

LOUIS. But the worst is yet to come. In your spare hours you can go to my house and cut de wood for next winter and ask my wife if she has any chores for you to do around the house.

PETER. Say, seeing I'll have so much spare time, couldn't you hire me out to the neighbors while I'm resting? When do I eat supper?

LOUIS. Supper is our most elaborate and substantial meal. For supper we have Mulligatawney soup imported from Punxatawney, Pa., lake trout from our own private lake, and spanked cream—I mean whipped cream, oysters on the shell and on the half shell, hard shell crabs and soft shell crabs, home-talent honey, and we also have fifty different kinds of meat.

PETER. Fifty different kinds of meat?

LOUIS. Yes; hash!

PETER. Mush for breakfast, mush for dinner, and hash for supper. I like the supper all right. How much salary do I get?

LOUIS. You get paid according to merit, seventy-five cents the first week, fifty cents the second and twenty-five cents the third. Is your life insured?

PETER. No, sir. But I've been vaccinated. Why do you ask?

LOUIS. Because you'll have to run the elevator and three boys have met a sudden and violent death by dropping into the cellar a hundred and fifty feet below and I was sued for alimony. I had to bury them at my own expense.

PETER. Buried three boys and expect to celebrate the fourth! Oh, I know I'll like this place.

LOUIS. Follow me. The first thing you've got to do is to feed de ferocious bull dog, Rexall.

PETER. See here, boss, I ain't no dog fancier and I don't

fancy feeding bull dogs. On second thoughts you can feed Rexall yourself.

LOUIS. Well, I'll feed him myself until he gets used to you. He's very fond of children; he could live on them. But come along and I'll introduce you to the mush.

[EXIT D. L.

PETER. I'll be so full of mush, I won't have much room for much else. [EXIT D. L.

ENTER D. R. *and* D. L. GIRLS *singing, and take their places behind counters as in* ACT I. *After song* ENTER CHEATHIM C. D. *and crosses to* L. *counter.*

CHEATHIM. Have you got any tobacco here?

GIRL. Yes, sir, what is your favorite brand?

CHEATHIM. Dull Burham. (*Or any other tobacco*)

GIRL. Yes, sir, we're having a run on that particular brand to-day.

CHEATHIM. How much a pound?

GIRL. Only eighty-five cents a pound to-day.

CHEATHIM. Very reasonable. I'll take a pound.

GIRL (*hands him a pound of tobacco*). Here you are, sir,

ENTER LOUIS, D. L.

CHEATHIM. By the way, do you take stamps?

GIRL. Yes, sir, we take anything but sass in "The Busy Bee."

CHEATHIM (*stamps three times on the floor*). And this one for your own sweet self. (*Stamps once*) Ta, ta, girlies! I'll send you my picture and a lock of my hair by parcel post.

[EXIT C. D.

SUSIE. Well, what do you know about that, girls?

LOUIS. I know this much about it, dot you girls will have to pay for the stamps.

SUSIE. Stung again!

LOUIS. Who said stung again?

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS. For de second and last time, Susie Sweeney, you are demoralizing "De Busy Bee" and you must go.

ALL GIRLS. If she goes, we all go with her.

LOUIS. What's dis, mutiny in "De Busy Bee"? What does it mean?

GIRLS. It means that we go out on a strike.

LOUIS. Only last week you went out on two strikes.

GIRLS. Well, this is three strikes and out. Down with "The Busy Bee."

LOUIS. I should think "De Busy Bee," is pretty well down now. (ALL GIRLS *come from behind the counters*)

GIRLS. Shall we submit to this, girls?

LOUIS (*crosses to* D. L., *calls*). Peter Piker.

ENTER PETER PIKER D. L.

PETER. What is it, boss?

LOUIS. Telephone for de police patrol.

PETER. (*crosses* UP C. *to 'phone.*) "The Busy Bee" is pinched. (*All the* GIRLS *make a dash for and try to seize* PETER, *who* EXITS C. D.)

GIRLS. Now seize the boss. (GIRLS *seize* LOUIS, *carry him to* C. D. *throw him out,* ALL *return and go* DOWN C.) If anyone calls for the boss tell them he's just stepped out. (ALL *sing*) "For we are jolly good girls, For we are jolly good girls, which nobody can deny."

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE:—*Same as* ACTS I *and* II. *Two days later.*

ENTER D. L. LOUIS, *who walks with a limp, and* PETER, *followed hastily by* SKIPPINGO *with large letter in his hand.*

SKIPPINGO. Good news, Mr. Schwoppenhoppenheimer.

LOUIS. Don't try to pronunciate my name, but tell me what's de good news, break it gently as I've got heart disease and may drop down dead on the spot.

SKIPPINGO. Well, I have here a petition.

LOUIS. What's dot, a Bill of Sale?

SKIPPINGO. No, sir, it is a written request from the salesgirls asking if they may come back. They have declared the strike off and under these circumstances I would advise you to take them back for with all their faults they were hustlers. Give them one more chance as we expect a rush of business during the holidays. And besides we have advertised "The Busy Bee" for sale, and in case we find a purchaser it would

be bad business policy not to have any salesgirls here on his arrival.

LOUIS. Skipp, you talk almost as sensible as a human being.

PETER. Yes, sir, Mr. Skipp is right. He has a great head and he ought to have been a mule. He is right from a business stand point; I like to see young ladies around; I enjoy their society and they like mine. And as for Susie Sweeney she can live in my heart and pay no rent.

SKIPPINGO. Then, sir, we may consider the matter settled. The salesgirls may have their former positions on condition of their future good behavior. (*Takes letter from pocket*) By the way, sir, I nearly forgot to give you this letter. It's important, no doubt, as it came by special delivery and you had better open it at once.

LOUIS (*opens letter, reads*). "My dear Mr. Louis Schwoppenhoppenheimer, seeing your establishment, "The Busy Bee," advertised for sale, and being anxious to enter the dry goods business, I will call upon you in prison——"

PETER (L.). He must take this place for the county jail.

SKIPPINGO (*looks at letter*). You made a mistake, sir, "I will call upon you in person."

LOUIS. Oh, that's different. (*Reads*) "I will call upon you in person and if the price is reasonable we may be able to arrange terms to our mutual satisfaction."

PETER. I guess he's in the Mutual Life Insurance Co.

LOUIS (*reads*). "I will call on the 23rd." Why, that's today. (*Reads*) "I remain, Yours, Mr. Rich from Richmond. P. S." What does that mean, P. S.?

PETER. P. S. stands for pea soup.

LOUIS (*reads*). "Have a man at the depot to meet me. He will easily recognize me as I shall carry a black and tan suit case containing fifty thousand dollars to pay spot cash, a silk umbrella and a pug dog with an ivory handle."

PETER. A pug dog with an ivory handle. I wonder what breed that fellow is.

SKIPPINGO. He must mean the umbrella has an ivory handle, not the dog.

LOUIS (*reads*). "I am five feet, ten and one half, light eyebrows, pink cheeks, blue eyes and a Roman nose. I'll arrive on the noon train if on time; if it is not, will come by the same train later on."

SKIPPINGO (*looks at watch*). Why, the noon train is due in ten minutes. [EXIT C. D.

LOUIS. Ya, dot's so. Peter, get a hustle on yourself and go

and meet him at de train. You'll easy know him, he's a tall complexioned man with blue cheeks, pink eyebrows and a pug dog with a Roman nose.

PETER. Oh, I'll know him all right. Me for Mr. Rich from Richmond. [EXIT C. D.

ENTER SKIPPINGO C. D.

SKIPPINGO. There is a delegation from the salesgirls outside. Shall I tell them the good news that all will be forgiven and forgotten?

LOUIS. Yah, all will be forgotten, even their back salaries.

SKIPPINGO. You see, we must be busy here when Mr. Rich from Richmond arrives to purchase "The Busy Bee." It will give him the impression that we are doing a rushing business. (*Talks off* C. D.) Now, young ladies, come right in and take your former places as if nothing unpleasant ever happened. We are expecting a customer to-day to buy out "The Busy Bee," and if we are successful in disposing it you shall be re-engaged at an increase of salary.

ENTER GIRLS C. D., *and take places, as usual.*

SUSIE. Come girls, let us give three cheers for the boss.

GIRLS. Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!

SKIPPINGO. The boss will now give you special instructions as to what he wishes each and everyone to do before the arrival of Mr. Rich from Richmond. [EXIT SKIPPINGO D. R.

LOUIS. Girls, come down here all of you. (GIRLS *form a circle around* LOUIS) I am going to give you some money.

GIRLS. Oh, won't that be nice!

LOUIS. But you'll have to give it back to me right away.

SUSIE. Stung again!

LOUIS. You must spend it in this store. I want half of you girls to go outside and when Mr. Rich comes you must enter as customers and buy a lot of goods, then Mr. Rich will think we are doing a rushing business. Susie Sweeney, you are a smart girl, here's five dollars for you and don't go out and spend it all on chewing gum. [EXEUNT *four girls*, C. D.

SUSIE. May I buy a taxicab with the change?

ENTER LENA D. L.

LOUIS (*to* SUSIE). You get out. (*To* LENA) Lena, my daughter, you stay here in the store and when dot Mr. Rich from Richmond comes, you make all de girls get busy.

LENA. Say dad, is Mr. Rich a young man?

LOUIS. Yah, about ten feet five—I mean five feet ten with a Roman nose and a satchel full of money.

LENA. What I want to know is, is he married or single?

LOUIS. Yah, I think he is, but you'll soon find out all about him. Peter Piker has gone to the train to meet him, if he ever gets back. (*To salesgirls*) Now you go behind the counter and those ladies shirt waists dot were sold for thirty-five cents last week mark them down to nineteen cents, and those ladies hose come too high, mark them down to twelve cents. And Lena, you lay for Mr. Rich from Richmond.

LENA (*crosses* UP *toward* C. D., *looks off* C. D.). I'm going to look out for Mr. Rich. Say pa, there is a poor woman without.

LOUIS. Without what?

LENA. Without a husband, I guess. (*Crosses to corner* L.)

PETER (*off stage* C. D.). This way, sir, this way.

LOUIS (*crosses* UP *to* C. D.). Girls, here comes Mr. Rich from Richmond, so get busy. (GIRLS *business.* LOUIS *crosses* DOWN *to* R. *corner*)

ENTER PETER C. D., *carrying suit case, followed by* MR. BROWNE, *who carries a book.*

PETER. Here he is, girls.

ENTER C. D. *four girls.*

GIRLS (*shouting*). Where is the bargain counter?

LOUIS. How do you do, Mr. Rich from Richmond?

BROWNE. I fear there has been some fearful mistake. I am not Mr. Rich from Richmond.

ALL. No!

BROWNE. No, I am Mr. Browne from Brownville.

LOUIS. And didn't you come to buy out my store, "The Busy Bee?"

BROWNE. No, sir, I don't like bees, they are apt to sting. I am a book agent. I have here a copy of the best seller "How to be Happy, Though Married" which I am selling at the ridiculously low price of one dollar and twenty-five cents.

LOUIS. A book agent. Oh, Gott im Himmel, Peter, throw him out.

PETER (*to* BROWNE). Right this way out, sir. (*Throws out* BROWNE C. D. EXIT C. D., *four salesgirls*)

LOUIS. Peter, why did you bring that fellow here?

PETER. Well, sir, he asked me to show him the homliest man in town and I brought him here to you——

LOUIS. Wot!

PETER. Thinking you might be able to direct him to someone homlier than yourself, if it was possible to find one in America.

LOUIS. Now you go right away back and find dot Mr. Rich from Richmond, or I'll fire you. Hurry or you'll be late for that train, and don't you bring in any more book agents or peddlers. We want no one but Mr. Rich from Richmond.

PETER (*crosses to* C. D.). I'll fetch him this time sure. A tall complexioned man with stout eyebrows. [EXIT C. D.

LOUIS. Girls, I'm going into de next room to change my mind (*Crosses to* D. L.) and water the stock. When Mr. Rich from Richmond comes, let me know. Remember he brings fifty thousand dollars and a Roman nose in a satchel.

ENTER WOMAN, C. D.

WOMAN. I say, you old Dutch sauerkraut, what do you mean by selling me the wrong kind of biscuit?

LOUIS. My good woman, I didn't did it.

WOMAN. No, but one of your chewing-gum salesgirls did it.

LOUIS. What was wrong mit dot biscuit?

WOMAN. When my husband began eating it, he noticed it had a strange taste so I looked at the label and it read "dog biscuit."

LOUIS. Well, how was the girl to know whether you wanted dot biscuit for your husband or for der dog. Did it make him sick?

WOMAN. No.

LOUIS. Den it must agree mit him. I would advise you to feed your husband on dog biscuit all de time and he'll make a good watch dog.

[EXIT LOUIS D. L. *and* WOMAN C. D.

PETER (*off stage* C. D.). Right this way, Mr. Rich.

LENA (*runs to* C. D.). He's coming, girls. (*Crosses* DOWN L. *corner*)

ENTER SKIPPINGO C. D.

SKIPPINGO (*crosses* DOWN R. *corner*). Mr. Rich is coming. Now girls, get busy.

ENTER PETER C. D., *carrying suit case, followed by* MR. RICH *and the four* SALESGIRLS *who create a great noise inquiring*

"Where is the bargain counter" *and various other questions ad libitum to give the impression that business is rushing.*

PETER (*crosses to* R. *corner*). Mr. Skippingo, this is Mr. Rich from Richmond.

SKIPPINGO (*crosses* C., *shakes hands with* MR. RICH). Glad to meet you, sir. We have been on the lookout for you, Mr. Rich.

PETER. Yes, sir, we have been laying for you.

SKIPPINGO (*to* PETER). Silence. (*To* MR. RICH) Mr. Rich, these are some of our salesladies.

RICH (*crosses to corner* R., *bows to all*). Charmed, ladies, I am sure—in fact delighted. You seem to be very busy here to-day.

PETER. Oh, not at all, sir, this is rather a dull day for "The Busy Bee." (*Crosses to* D. L., *call off* D. L.). Oh, boss, come here.

ENTER LOUIS D. L.

LOUIS. What is all dis racket here?

PETER. Boss, this is Mr. Rich from Richmond, who has come to buy "The Busy Bee."

LOUIS. I am glad to meet you, sir.

RICH. The honor is all mine, Mr. Schwoppenhoppen—(*Sneezes*) excuse me ladies, but I am suffering from a slight attack of hay fever.

PETER (*aside*). I think he has the heaves.

RICH. As I was about to say, you are, Mr. Schwoppen——

LOUIS. Yah, I know who I was, but don't try to pronunciate it. Three men died from lock-jaw trying to say it. Lena, come over here at once. [EXIT SKIPPINGO D. L.

LENA (*going* C.). Here I am, pa.

LOUIS. Mr. Rich, this is my daughter Lena.

RICH. Delighted to make the acquaintance of Miss Lena Schwoppenhoppen—(*Sneezes*)

PETER (*aside,* L. *corner*). He'll strangle this time sure.

LOUIS. Don't say it, or you'll never live to buy out my store. Call her "Schwopp" for Short.

RICH. Well, then, Miss Lena "Schwopp for Short," I am charmed to make your acquaintance. I am, really, don't you know.

LENA. Oh, really, Mr. Rich, the pleasure is all mine.

RICH. Pardon me for a moment, ladies, I'm somewhat

fatigued. I've my smelling salts somewhere here. (*Takes out small bottle from satchel*) It always refreshes me after a long journey.

GIRLS (*in chorus*). Oh, you sweet thing! Oh, you angel face. (LOUIS *tries to quiet them by pantomime.* MR. RICH *takes out powder puff and hand-glass and powders his face*)

PETER (*aside*). If I had that face, I'd use dynamite. (*Aloud*) Say, boss, what shall I do with the rest of the money down stairs? Every bushel basket is full.

LOUIS. Put it in that large empty sugar barrel and when dot is full get de cistern out in de yard. [EXIT PETER D. L.

RICH. You seem to be doing a rushing business here.

LOUIS. Yah, Russian, Polish, Irish and Scandinavian, one and all, dey trade at "The Busy Bee."

MR. RICH. Well, Mr. Schwoppen——

LOUIS. Don't say it—just call me Louis for short.

RICH. Well then, "Louis for Short," before we proceed to the important business that brought me here, I am going out to take my daily buttermilk ablution.

LOUIS. Ab—whatshun?

RICH. My buttermilk bath.

LOUIS. Gott im Himmel, do you bathe yourself all mit buttermilk?

RICH. Yes, sir, you see my physician ordered it for my complexion. Can you direct me to a lactatorium?

LENA. He means a dairy kitchen, pa.

LOUIS. Do you bathe in a dairy kitchen?

RICH. No, I take lunch there. A lactatorium is a new name for a buttermilk bathing place, really, don't you know.

LENA. Wouldn't an ice-creamorium do just as well?

RICH. Well, fair creature, lead me to the ice-creamorium and then I shall proceed to the lactatorium.

LOUIS (*aside*). And then we'll lead him to the sanatorium. This fellow is crazy. I wonder if he has the fifty thousand dollars with him. I'll try and find out. (*Aloud*) Mr. Rich, while you are out taking your buttermilk bath, suppose you leave your money and valuables here in the safe until you come back. This is a dangerous place and you might get robbed.

RICH. Yes, I might, that's the reason I shan't leave it here.

LOUIS (*aside*). I don't think he's quite as crazy as I at first thought he was.

RICH. Thanks. I'll take care that no one takes care of it except myself. (*Indicates sign*) I see you have a sign reading "No Trust." I take that hint, I don't trust anyone. "Since man to man is so unjust. How can I tell which man to trust."

LOUIS. Do as you please, Mr. Rich, I must go down stairs and send a few hundred thousand to the safe deposit vaults. I'm overstocked mit money. (*Crosses to* D. L.) My daughter Lena will entertain you till I come back. Take good care of yourself in this wicked city, and above all don't drown yourself in dot buttermilk bath. [EXIT D. L.

RICH. Oh, I shan't be lonesome in the society of so many charming young ladies, really, don't you know. And if I can't entertain them, perhaps they can entertain me.

NOTE. A specialty can be introduced by Mr. Rich assisted by Peter and the girls.

RICH (*after specialty*). Now my charming "Lena Schwop for Short," if you will conduct me to a saloon——

LENA *and* GIRLS. What!

RICH. I mean an ice-cream saloon where I can refresh the inner man.

GIRLS. What about refreshing the inner woman?

RICH. Now, girls, don't get jealous and I'll order an extra large can of ice-cream and you can have an ice-cream social all to yourselves.

GIRLS. Oh, won't that be nice. Three cheers for Mr. Rich. (GIRLS *cheer*)

RICH. Thanks ladies. (*To* LENA) Loveliest of 'thy sex, come with me and we will wander beneath the stars and wonder which star will be our star when love becomes immortal.

LENA. I will go with thee, my own sweet Romeo.

[EXEUNT MR. RICH *and* LENA C. D.

ENTER LOUIS D. L.

LOUIS. Is dot Mr. Rich gone?

BERTHA. Yes, and Lena is gone with him.

LOUIS. She'll take good care of him and his money.

ENTER FLIM-FLAM C. D., *carrying kodak.*

FLIM-FLAM. Ah, fair ladies, may I take a picture.

BERTHA. Oh, girls, he's going to take our picture. (GIRLS *all pose in different positions*)

FLIM-FLAM (*goes* C., *turns back to audience as if about to take picture*) Now ladies, if you will kindly look straight out and keep your eyes on yonder (*Mention anything out in front of house.* GIRLS *do so.* FLIM-FLAM *crosses* UP, *takes down*

dollar which is in frame over C. D. *puts it in his pocket*) That will do, ladies. I'll call again soon, if not sooner. [EXIT C. D.

LOUIS. Buncoed again. There goes the first dollar I ever took in at "De Busy Bee" and you all stand and let him walk off mit de picture.

GIRLS. We thought he only wanted to take a picture of the store.

LOUIS. What next, I wonder?

BERTHA. Cheer up, old man, the worst is yet to come.

LOUIS. Who said the worst is yet to come?

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me. Well, you'll catch him for he said he's come again.

LOUIS. Yah, dot's what dey all say, but dey never do. Oh, Gott im Himmel, I'm ruined.

ENTER LENA C. D.

LENA. What's the matter, pa?

LOUIS. A swindler walks right in, takes de first dollar I took in in "De Busy Bee," and walks right out again. My first dollar is gone and my last dollar nearly gone. I might as well go to the Poor House.

LENA. Cheer up, pa, that fellow will get pinched when he tries to pass that dollar because it's bogus.

LOUIS. My first dollar bogus, how's dot?

LENA. It's a Confederate bill. You see, one day I wanted to buy a rat for my hair. I took out the good bill and put in the Confederate one so he'll get pinched all right.

LOUIS. Where did you leave dot Mr. Rich?

LENA. He went to take his buttermilk bath after which he will get his face massaged, then he'll have his fingers manicured. I tell you he is up-to-date, he is.

LOUIS. I hope he ain't up to anything else, why don't he get his hair calcimined? He may get touched for his boodle before he buys out my store, or he may be one of those green-goods fellows dot peddle gold bricks.

LENA. He's got the boodle, he's not a faker, pa, he's all wool.

LOUIS. Yah, so is a sheep.

LENA. There's some class to him and he's going to buy me a taxicab. [EXIT D. L.

LOUIS. I hope he'll turn up all right, nearly everyone dot comes in here is a swindler or a thief.

ENTER PETER D. L. *and* SMOOTHTOUCH C. D.

SMOOTHTOUCH (*to* LOUIS). Good day, sir, are you the proprietor of "The Busy Bee?"

LOUIS. Yah, I think I was, but I ain't proud of it.

SMOOTHTOUCH. The bank is closed and I wish to procure a fifty dollar bill for a number of small ones, if you can oblige me.

LOUIS. Your money ain't confectionery, is it?

SMOOTHTOUCH. If you mean Confederate, oh, no, sir. You wouldn't take me for a swindler, would you?

LOUIS. No, sir, I wouldn't take you for a Christmas present. I didn't say you wasn't a swindler, did I not?

SMOOTHTOUCH. I assure you, sir, I am an honest man.

LOUIS. Yah, dot's what dey all say before dey swindle me.

PETER. Boss, that man is all right, if I'm any judge of human nature. Can't you see the stamp of honesty on his open face countenance?

LOUIS. The stamp is pretty well worn off.

PETER. I'll go good for him.

LOUIS. Yah, but who'll go good for you? All right mine honest friend, I think I've got a fifty dollar bill that I was saving up for a rainy day.

SMOOTHTOUCH (*counts money into* LOUIS' *outstretched hand*). Five, ten, fifteen, sixteen—by the way, how old is your beautiful daughter?

LOUIS. Twenty-four.

SMOOTHTOUCH (*counts as before*). Twenty-five, twenty-seven and how old is your charming wife?

LOUIS. Forty-eight.

SMOOTHTOUCH (*counts as before*). Forty-nine, fifty. There you are, sir. (*Takes fifty dollar bill from* LOUIS) Thanks, sir, here's my card. Good day, sir, I shall not soon forget your kindness. (*Sings as he* EXITS) "Then you'll remember me."

[EXIT C. D.

LOUIS (*reads card*). Slippery Elm Smoothtouch.

PETER. Boss, I don't like that name. I think you'd better count over that money.

LOUIS (*counts money*). Gott im Himmel, I've only got fourteen dollars for my fifty dollar bill.

PETER (*laughing*). How old is your beautiful daughter and how old is your charming wife? Say boss, your name ought to be Mr. Easy Mark or Puddinhead.

LOUIS. Oh, dis is de last straw dot breaks de elephant's trunk. Peter, you run out and find dot Mr. Rich and if he

hasn't already yet committed susanside I will sell out "Dis Busy Bee" at half price right away quick.

PETER. That Mr. Rich may have drowned himself in his buttermilk bath. [EXIT PETER C. D.

LOUIS. Den I was a lost Dutchman.

RE-ENTER PETER C. D., *carrying door mat.*

PETER. Say, boss, you'd better keep this inside. I saw a man wipe his feet on it just now.

LOUIS. You fool, dot is what is called a door mat, it was made to wipe the feet on.

PETER. Is that so? I generally use a towel. [EXIT C. D.

LOUIS. Dot boy will have a bad finish yet. He'll end up as a base-ball umpire and so he won't have a friend in the world. (*Crosses* L. *and sits in chair*) Young ladies, be on your good conduct. Mr. Rich will soon come back.

GIRLS (*sing*). "We don't care if he never comes back."

LOUIS. Who said "We don't care if he never comes back?"

GIRLS (*in sing-song tone*). It was Susie Sweeney.

SUSIE (*in same tone*). Oh, no, it was not me.

LOUIS. Susie Sweeney, I'll have to fine you two dollars. Not because I believe you guilty, but because I need the money. (ENTER PETER D. L. *with large axe*) What for is dot axe, Peter?

PETER. Boss, I heard you say you wanted to cut down expenses. Let me give you a pointer.

LOUIS. I already have a bull-dog. I'm not a dog fancier, keep him yourself.

PETER. My pointer is a business trip. They say music has charms to jolly the Reuben. Now my plan is this, when Mr. Rich comes in, let all the girls sing and under the influence of music you can make a good bargain.

ENTER LENA C. D.

LOUIS. Dot was a good idea to turn "De Busy Bee" into a singing bee. Where is my daughter Lena? Now Lena, you get down de music sheet and get busy. What shall we sing?

SUSIE. "Come into my Parlor, said the spider to the fly."

LOUIS. Susie Sweeney, dot will cost you one stick of chewing gum for each girl.

PETER. Let us all sing "When Reuben Comes to Town."

LENA. Oh, that would sound too personal. Let us sing "Oh, you kid."

PETER. What's the matter with "Strike up the band, here comes a Sailor?"

LENA. But Mr. Rich is no sailor.

PETER. Why of course he is, ain't this place for sale? (LENA *aims blow at* PETER)

LENA. As head musical demonstrator I will select the music.

GIRLS. Hear, hear!

LOUIS. What is the matter mit dis hear business, I am de boss here and I will do all de hear hear business. (GIRLS *go* DOWN *stage, sing and all join in chorus*)

During song ENTER MR. RICH C. D.

RICH (*after song*). Ah, young ladies, I congratulate you one and all upon your vocal abilities. I perceive you are all singing bees in "The Busy Bee."

PETER. Yes, sir, our girls are some singers; there's only one thing their throats need.

RICH. What is it?

PETER. Cutting. (*Crosses to corner* L.)

RICH. Now that is the unkindest cut of all.

GIRLS. I should say so. (GIRLS *cross behind counters, except* LENA, *who remains* C. R.)

BERTHA (*spouting*). "The man who lays his hand upon a woman save in the way of kindness is unworthy the name of an American."

SUSIE. Shakespeare!

LOUIS. Girls, you shut up. Shakespeare is a dead one. Now to business, Mr. Rich.

RICH. Yes, of course, and that reminds me of a telegram I have just received. I regret very much to state that I have bad news for you.

LOUIS (L. C.). If you've got bad news to told me, don't told me, I can't stand much more. Don't say dot you've lost your money in the buttermilk bath.

RICH. No. The telegram is from my family physician. I see you are doing a big business in "The Busy Bee."

PETER. You bet we are. Why, we are six months behind in filling orders for our country customers.

RICH. My family physician knows that I've got a weak heart.

LENA (*aside to* LOUIS *who is* L. C.). I hope he don't get cold feet.

RICH. And fearing that the excitement of such a rush of business might produce heart failure, he warns me against

such a dangerous undertaking as it might prove fatal, so I'll have to call the deal off. I cannot buy "The Busy Bee."

LOUIS. Stung again! (*Falls back into* PETER'S *arms*)

PETER (*supporting* LOUIS *to chair* L.). You have killed the poor old man.

LOUIS. Yah, let me die in pieces.

LENA. You should have broken the news gently. Now you can be held responsible for papa's death. What have you to say about it?

PETER. Yes, sir, what have you got to say for yourself? His blood is upon your head and his death is at your door and Sherlock Holmes will be on your track.

BERTHA. "And the villain still pursued him."

LOUIS. Shut up, Bertha Clay, or your name will be Mud.

RICH. I have only this to say. I'm willing to make all the reparation in my power, Mr. Schwoppenhoppenheimer, although I cannot carry out the business deal as I expected, I have another plan that I trust will meet with your approval. Since I have met your daughter, Lena, I have fallen madly in love with her. In fact it was a case of love at first sight, and if you will give your consent to the union all may turn out for the best. I have the fifty thousand dollars in my satchel. Can I have your daughter?

LOUIS (*jumping up*). Yah, take her for fifty thousand, I only wish I had three or four more daughters, you could have them at the same price.

RICH. Very well, that's a bargain.

BERTHA. Bless you, my children.

PETER. Hold, I forbid the bans.

ALL. What!

PETER. Unless I can marry Susie Sweeney.

LOUIS. Yah, you can marry Susie, and all de rest of de chickens for I am going to retire from "De Busy Bee." I've been stung too often.

GIRLS (*go* C. ALL *sing*). "For he's a jolly good fellow—He's a jolly good fellow—which nobody can deny." (*This or any other popular song with a full chorus may be used*)

CURTAIN.

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Act III.—Six months later. Scene, library in Mrs. Briscoe's New York house. Eve of Jim's wedding. The toast. Norah's disclosure. Exposure of Paul. Mrs. Briscoe's mistake. Nelly's escape. "When a man's single! Oh, then!"

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